

Meet the 2024-2025 Diversity Fellowship Program Fall Fellows

INDIA SIMMONS | PROGRAM MANAGER, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS

The APSA Diversity Fellowship Program, formerly the Minority Fellowship Program, was established in 1969 as a fellowship competition to diversify the political science profession. The DFP provides support to students applying to, or in the early stages of, a PhD program in political science. The goal of the program is to increase the number of scholars from minoritized backgrounds in the discipline and ultimately the professoriate. APSA has once again awarded a new cycle to provide support for students currently in the process of applying to political science PhD programs for Fall 2024. Please join us in congratulating the 2024-2025 class of fellows. Learn more about DFP at <https://apsanet.org/dfp>

TEAH ARDOIN



Teah Ardoin graduated from the University of California, Irvine, with a bachelor's degree in political science. Afterwards, she received a master's degree in higher education and administration policy from the University of California, Riverside.

Teah is a second-year master's student in political science at San Francisco State University (SFSU). She is a California State University pre-doctoral scholar awardee for students interested in conducting advanced-level research. During her first year at SFSU, Teah presented her research at a political science conference focusing on partisanship in the United States House of Representatives based on voting behavior by gender and party affiliation. She will present research during her second year at a social science conference investigating the significance of political parties over gender in reproductive rights. Teah plans to obtain a PhD in political science in the subfield of American politics, examining the intersectionality of gender and overlapping identity categories in politics.

ANSON CHUNG



Anson Cheuk-Hin Chung (he/him) is an MA student in political science at the University of Toronto. He studies both the politics of immigration policies and judicial politics on constitutional interpretations. His current research focuses on how factors like race, economic selection, and foreign

policy affect the government's decision to make immigration policies, with a focus on Canada and the UK. Chung earned a BA in history and political science from CUNY City College of New York (CCNY) in June 2022, where he was a Kaye scholar. His bachelor's paper focused on how politically incentivized migration is not dependent on the migrant's connection to the destination country. An immigrant from Hong Kong, Chung seeks to use his PhD research to empirically trace the difficulties faced by migrants in Western countries, from migration policies to local policies during integration into the new society, and how courts play a role in it.

HASNA COSKUN



Saliha Coskun is a senior at the University of Pennsylvania majoring in political science with three minors: statistics, survey research & data analytics, and Arabic & Islamic studies. At Penn, she is a fellow for both the Penn Program on Opinion Research and Election Studies and the Program

for Research on Religion where she is conducting research and authoring academic articles on the relationship between religion and politics in the US through archival data analysis. Her senior thesis comparatively explores the use of religious rhetoric in political discourse of the US and Turkish governments. Additionally, she serves as an editor for the Penn Undergraduate Law Journal and acts as a policy analyst for the Wharton Undergraduates in Public Policy Club. She is also a Pi Sigma Alpha member and Millennium Fellow. Upon finishing her undergraduate studies, Saliha plans to pursue a PhD to professionally continue researching and studying topics in political science.

SEKOU JABATEH



Sekou is a political science graduate from New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) and a research fellow at New York University, specializing in conflict, ethnicity and politics, and political economy. At NYUAD, he received multiple awards at both the university and departmental levels,

including competitive conference presentation funding, the social science capstone funding award, and the distinguished post-graduation research fellowship, awarded annually to the top 2% of graduating seniors with a commitment to academic research. Sekou has acquired rigorous training and experience in quantitative and statistical techniques. In addition to foundational courses at NYUAD and graduate-level coursework in quantitative methods from Princeton University, he has extensively utilized quantitative analysis and causal inference in his research. His field experiments in Sub-Saharan Africa and presentations of theoretically informed empirical research have bolstered his commitment to doctoral studies in political science and shaped his professional goal of pursuing university-level research and teaching.

JA'NAE JACKSON



Ja'nae Jackson earned her undergraduate degree in political science with honors from Texas Christian University in 2022. Her research interests include race and ethnic politics, political behavior, and political thought. She is currently a second-year Pre-Doctoral Fellow with Yale University's Center

for the Study of American Politics, working with Dr. Allison Harris on projects related to the politics of punishment, political institutions, and

race. Jackson developed her research interests as a 2021 APSA Ralph Bunche Scholar and a 2022 Society for Political Methodology Expansions Initiative Fellow. She has presented her research at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, the Emerging Scholars Conference at the University of Michigan, and the Graduate Immersion Conference at The Ohio State University. After completing her fellowship, she intends to pursue a Ph.D. to become a professor of political science and improve diversity in the discipline among historically underrepresented groups.

BRITTANY JONES



Brittany Pryor Jones recently completed her MSc in social research at Birkbeck, University of London. Her master's dissertation project focused on the effects of co-ethnic bias on the support of the second amendment amongst southern Americans. The research project used quantitative data analysis to evaluate the effects of implicit attitudes formed through shared ethnicity on southern American's perspective of current gun policy. Her future research endeavors include evaluating the effects of unconscious attitudes on the development of policy in public and private sectors and exploring policies and implicit attitudes that affect underrepresented communities both in mixed ethnicity and homogeneous environments. Prior to completing her master's program, Brittany spent a year living as a volunteer in Uganda, East Africa where she established and operated an education support program to benefit underprivileged youth in rural communities. She is currently applying for PhD programs beginning in Fall of 2024.

MATTHIAS LOPEZ



Matthias Elijah Lopez graduated from the University of the Pacific with departmental honors in political science and philosophy. Through a political science PhD program, he plans to continue researching questions within political behavior that pertain to understanding the neural, environmental, and biological mechanisms responsible for political belief and political ideology formation. His capstone, "ME in VR: Will Mere Exposure to Virtual Reality Content Impact Political Ideology?" incorporated virtual reality (VR) simulations to understand if VR influences political attitudes and political ideology. Continuing this research, he participated in the APSA-sponsored workshop Breaking the Barriers to Entry, developing "US Immigration Policies Impact on Immigrants' Mental Health," a prospectus for utilizing a VR simulation of an immigration raid to understand if this experience alters a participant's attitudes toward immigration policy. Matthias is a member of Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and hopes to mentor students from marginalized backgrounds.

LEONARDO MORAVEG



Leonardo Moraveg graduated from Brown University with honors in June of 2022 with a BA in international and public affairs as he wrote a senior thesis that examined the extent to which Mexico underwent democratic backsliding from 2000 to the present. During his time at Brown, Leonardo wrote for the Brown Political Review, the Democratic Erosion Consortium, and interned with the US Department of State under the

Office of Mexican Affairs. Leonardo is interested in pursuing a PhD in political science in comparative politics with a regional focus on Latin America. He hopes to research the causal relationship between low-capacity institutions and subpar democratic performance in Latin America to help explain why nations in the region fail to consolidate democratically. Leonardo hopes to utilize his future degree to further investigate the democratic and governance challenges in Latin America, while simultaneously teaching and inspiring future generations of first-generation and low-income students.

MATIANA PARRA



Matiana Parra originates from Los Angeles, California. Her research examines how economic policies drive immigration out of the Northern Triangle countries and other states in Latin America as well as how other relevant factors cause migration, such as extreme poverty, widespread violence, and climate change/disaster. She hopes to continue this migration studies research to understand solutions to migration crises such as the mass migrations from Venezuela and Honduras. She is interested in studying strategies for effective immigrant integration and attitudes towards immigrants in the states to which they arrive. She earned her bachelor's in political science from California State University, Los Angeles, and her master's in global studies from University of California, Berkeley.

JAIR PELTIER



Jair Peltier, Bear clan of the Anishinaabe, is currently enrolled at the Catholic University of America in a human rights master's program with their Institute of Human Ecology. He is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, where he is an adjunct professor of American government and politics at Turtle Mountain Community College. Jair's main academic experience is in American politics, international political economy, as well as comparative politics. His research is primarily involved with Indigenous sovereignty and tribal constitutional development and reform. He has most recently presented research at the American Political Science Association conference in Los Angeles, the International Political Science Association world congress in Buenos Aires, and the American Indian College Fund faculty convening in Denver.

ERICA RIRAY



Erica Riray graduated from Loyola Marymount University with honors in political science and Asian Pacific American studies in 2022. After graduating, she joined the Berggruen Institute's Renovating Democracy program, where she currently studies democratic innovation and deliberative democracy. Her research interests include Asian American politics, urban politics, political behavior, and political psychology. In her doctoral studies, Erica hopes to examine how instances of heightened national awareness of racial justice have contributed to Asian American political identity and participation. Motivated by her background in ethnic studies, Erica aims to capture nuances between Asian American subgroups and build a theory of Asian American political identity that reflects the dynamic heterogeneity of the population. She strives to build off her honors thesis on native-born Filipino American political identity in Los Angeles. Erica has presented her

thesis at the Midwest Political Science Association, LMU Undergraduate Symposium, and University of Maryland Rising Scholars Conference.

SHERLEAN ROBERTS



Sherlean Roberts, a distinguished senior at Marquette University, is a dedicated scholar pursuing a triple major in political science, international affairs, and peace studies. As the Vice President of the Lambda Lambda Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., she actively contributes to the university community. Sherlean, a McNair scholar, has showcased her research prowess at various conferences, including the prestigious International Studies Association. Her commitment to academic excellence led her to participate in the University of Iowa Summer Research Opportunity Program as a research assistant, where she delved into extensive research on Chinese soft power initiatives in African countries. Sherlean's research interests span international security, soft power, and the role of NGOs in global affairs. Her contributions have been recognized at different symposia and conferences, most recently at the Midwest Political Science Association's event. As a Big Ten Academic Alliance SROP scholar, Sherlean conducted in-depth research on aid dynamics between African countries and the Chinese government, further solidifying her expertise in international relations. With a vision for positive change, Sherlean aspires to leverage her PhD in political science to continue impactful research and foster meaningful connections with like-minded students dedicated to making a difference.

CAYLEB STIVES

Cayleb Bryant Stives graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) with a BA in communication studies and an MA in political science. His research interests include political communications, extrajudicial communications, and political psychology. His master's thesis explored a novel concept he coined "judicial influencers"



which characterizes the social media influencer-like behaviors exhibited by some state high court judges finding a positive relationship in the engagement of tweets that embodied the judge's specific brands of "homestyle". While at UTEP, he presented at two national conferences and collaborated with faculty in the department of political science and public policy as a research assistant to produce published work in the fields of judicial politics and political psychology/communications. Cayleb is currently applying to PhD programs with the hopes of continuing on to teach and mentor the next generation of marginalized and underrepresented students.

CRISTINA TORIJA



Cristina graduated with high honors from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras in 2023, where she earned a BA in political science and government. Her research interests include Latin American politics, political violence, legacies of repression and authoritarianism, distributive politics, social welfare, and non-state actors such as religious institutions and criminal groups. She is currently working as a research assistant at the University of Pittsburgh's Social Vulnerability and Resilience Lab (SOLVER). Before that, Cristina participated in the Leadership Alliance's Summer Research Early Identification Program in 2022, through which she worked in the Transitional Justice and Democratic Stability Lab (TJDS) at the University of Chicago. Her research has been presented at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium, the Western Political Science Association annual conference, the Midwest Political Science Association annual conference, and the International Studies Association annual conference. After receiving a PhD in political science, Cristina aspires to become a scholar and researcher that mentors students from underrepresented backgrounds and underfunded institutions. This way, she hopes to contribute to increasing the presence of Latinx and other minorities in academia. ■

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